

Text: "Having made peace through the blood of his cross." Col. 1:20
Topic: THE CROSS MEANS PEACE

This verse says that the cross means peace. (If so, the gospel of the cross is the gospel this shattered world needs today.) But what peace is there in a cross? ^{If anything.} Surely the cross is bloody agony, not peace; it is the cold torture of iron-pierced hands; it is torment, and defeat, and death--all this, but not peace.

Didn't Paul know that? [Cicero did. Cicero said,

"To bind a Roman citizen is an outrage; to scourge him a crime; it almost amounts to the murder of one's own father to put a Roman to death; how shall I describe crucifixion? No adequate word can be found to represent so execrable an enormity."]

^{Why "no,"} Yet Paul, looking for an "adequate word" ^{to describe the meaning of the cross, did he} (for this "execrable enormity"), called ^{it peace.} ^{to describe the meaning of the cross, did he} ^{to describe the meaning of the cross, did he} it peace. How can it be? How did Christ ^{make the cross peace?} In two ways, I think. First, the cross means peace for the world; and second, in an even more direct sense, the cross means peace for you, peace for you who will come to find your peace in Him. ^{who does it.}

When I say that the cross means peace for the world, I do not mean that the cross has brought world-peace. Quite the opposite, I am afraid. All in the name of the cross the church of the crusaders brought war, not peace, and threw army after plundering army across Europe into Palestine. All in the name of the cross it made a desert ~~and a shambles~~ of Southern France in ^a ~~its~~ blood-mad heresy hunt against ^{heretics, the} the humble Albigenses. All in the name of the cross Christians have hunted down Jews and killed them like ^{by most} rats. ^{by most} Confess it with shame: Hitler learned it from the Church. Have you read of the Jewish pogroms in Russia, how priests of the Orthodox Church, huge crosses emblazoned on their robes, and carrying golden crucifixes, would lead mobs to burn and pillage and murder in the homes of the Jews; or how ~~these~~ Jews would be herded into line and ~~the~~ soldiers would pass along

looking for those who were wearing no crosses about their necks, ^{or cynical} ~~and how~~ The devil-
^{and orthodox among them would try} ~~demot~~ Jews seeking to cover their lack by lowering their heads ~~only to~~ ^{only to} ~~and~~ only to
have their chins roughly jerked up, and when no cross was found be thrown
to the ground while the soldiers ^{stomped} ~~ground~~ their heavy, hob-nailed boots in
their faces. All that in the name of the cross. How can we say it has ~~been~~
made peace?

We can make some show of argument in its favor. There is the
curious, rather pathetic attempt of the church of the 11th century to bring
a Christian peace to the world. The Peace of God it was called, ~~as~~ The
church ordered the warring princes of Europe not to interfere with the
rights of non-combatants, not to harm the clergy, or pilgrims, and merchants
and farmers, not to cut down trees and destroy fields of grain. It was an
attempt to make of war a private little game between princes, a sport for
gentlemen, instead of the all-devouring disaster that it is today. The
Church even went farther and put a closed season on war: In memory of
Christ's death on the cross there was to be no fighting from Wednesday even-
ing to Monday morning, no matter what war was on. That was an attempt in
the name of the cross to bring peace for at least four days out of seven.
It was only partially successful, but that partial success is one of the few
bright spots in the almost unrelieved gloom of the Dark Ages. When you blame
the church for the crusades, remember to credit it with the Truce of God.

But that really isn't much of an achievement, is it? (Even if we
add to it the tender work of the Red Cross, or the tremendous burden borne
by medical missionaries to relieve suffering in China; if you add to it
the triumph of the (Japanese) Church, ^{and the world} in preserving unbroken their bonds of
fellowship (with the Church of) ⁱⁿ Christ in China--the only bond that held un-
broken when all others snapped under the cumulating tensions and hatreds of
battle--add all these, done in the name of the cross of Jesus Christ, but
they do not add up to peace.)

No, it is not world peace that the cross brings, but peace for the world, peace in two senses: (1) In the cross we see a sovereign God over-ruling all disorder by the order and peace of his own perfect will; and (2) In the cross we have a present anticipation of future world peace.

1) present over-arching peace
2) anticipated future peace.

The first is peace on a cosmic scale. Brooding above the little eddies and whirlpools of this restless world there is peace in the sovereign will of God. All our times are in His hands, ^{even the best times. Exultation & confusion following death is a great blessing. That} At the very moment when chaos reached its climax in the death of Christ on the cross, ^{at that very moment} by the unfathomable will of the Living God that chaotic climax, the cross, became the foundation of our peace. For even the terrible cross is ordained of God, and in the order of his universe it becomes peace.

It seems to me in his mind. How do we know? Because there is a great peace.

^{If that sounds strangely contradictory} Perhaps I can illustrate this by the old pictures ^{of} St George and the dragon. You've seen them, haven't you--St. George in shining armor, grasping the banner of the cross in one hand, and in the other holding a sword unsheathed, running with the blood of the ~~writhing~~ dragon at his feet. At first glance the picture seems one of primeval struggle and conflict, but one significant detail wipes out that first impression. St. George's foot is (always) on the neck of the dragon, and that one detail somehow transforms the effect of the picture, in spite of the blood and gore, ^{transforming it} from struggle into peace, peace reflected in the face of the conqueror. Of course, if you look only at the dragon, twisting as it flies, there is no peace. But don't leave out St. George; look at his foot. It is always on the neck of the beast, and there is peace.

Now the cross stands at that moment in history when God, like St. George, brings his foot down. [It is a moment dimly foreshadowed long before in an almost forgotten prophecy. Remember how in the Book of Genesis God cursed the deceiving serpent in Eden and said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Jesus, the seed of the

woman, bruised on the cross for our sins, is, in a figure, the mighty foot of God bruising the head of the serpent. God's heel is bruised, but his foot comes down.]

When you look at the world, just as when you look at the picture (of St. George,) the first impression is one of struggle, terrible struggle, ^{world wars & revolutions, atom bombs, & his muscles}

[That element is certainly in the picture--don't deny it, as the Christian Scientists try to do.] But if you keep your eyes focussed on God, in the world as in the picture you will see things in true proportion, and you will find peace. [God's hand is mightier than the sword, ^{God has not his feet down} his foot is always on the neck of the beast. [The cross lifts the curtain of the ages and lets us see that when the powers of darkness ^{had} ~~have~~ scaled the very ramparts of heaven, when like a thick and evil cloud swirling out of the pit they threaten to snuff out the Light of the World, at that very moment the Light is declared gloriously inextinguishable.]

When Satan battles with the Son of God, even as he nails him to the cross, ^{The cross & the grave could not hold him.} victory is with the Son. And that means peace--a peace far greater than this little world of ours can comprehend, a peace beyond time in eternity, (peace on a cosmic scale)

This is also a case in which

This is what Jesus meant in the world as he said "I have overcome the world"

That victory on the cross is a foretaste, an anticipation of the blessed time when the Christ whom the cross could not hold will return as conqueror and Prince of Peace, and will rule the earth in righteousness and peace, when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, when men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruninghooks, nation shall not rise against nation, and they shall study war no more.

That time is not here yet. The fight is not over. But peace in a very real sense is here already. Strangely enough, peace anticipated brings peace. It is something like the peace and assurance that a doctor brings into a home made frantic by sudden illness. The doctor has come, and it is all right. Is the boy all well? No, but the doctor has come, and the anxious parents relax as they watch him about his work, steady and calm and sure. The fight is not over, but already peace is in the home.

That is one way the cross brings peace. [It answers our worried anxious questions as we grope for peace in a world at war. Fret not, it says, the Great Physician has already come, and he will bring you peace. See how he stills our doubts and fears: someone has pointed out that when men cry, "There can't be a god of love, because if there were and he looked on this world his heart would break"--when they say that, we need only point to the cross, "His heart does break." When they say, "God made the world; he is responsible and he should carry the load," we can point to the cross, "He does carry the load." When they say, "There can't be a God of peace, because if there were, the god of war would be too strong for him, and he would die," again we point to the cross, "He did die." But--and here is the victory--death could not hold him. Remember the words of the apostle, "The God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.."

Note that - it was the God of peace that raised him.

^ The God of peace, stronger than war, stronger than death.] The cross tells us that God ^{still rules, that he loves} ~~cares for~~ this bleeding world; ^{and that He has come & it is all right} ~~that he carries all its sorrows;~~ that he has overcome the world. ~~And that~~ that does add up to peace!

"This is my father's world, O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.
This is my father's world, the battle is not done:
Jesus who died shall be justified, and earth and heaven be one."

Nevertheless, though there is peace in knowing that the eternal God is not dethroned by war, and that the cross is a victory with promise of future blessedness, how is that peace made real to us now? Isn't there a danger that a peace which must be big enough for the stars and for eternity will be so vast and abstract that it will completely miss you and me struggling as we are in our little moment of time. Isn't there a danger that peace which must be anticipated may never come true. After all, we are living in the present, not the future. We are in the picture, not looking at it from the outside. What comfort is there in the knowledge that God's foot is on the dragon's neck, if we are being cut to pieces by its thrashing

tail. What does the cross mean ^{www} then? Does it mean peace for brother fighting against brother in China; does it mean peace for the homeless in shattered ^{Europe} Europe, for the dying in ^{Palestine} Palestine. Does it mean peace for you and for me? If it doesn't-- if it means peace only in an abstract, cosmic, over-all sense, if it means peace only in some distant future at the end of time, then it doesn't ^{mean} mean peace at all for you and me.

Thank God that the peace of the cross is not like that. It is a peace that passeth all understanding, yes, but it is also a peace we do understand-- [the peace of a mother comforting her child, of a bird protecting her young.] The Bible says to us, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty... He shall cover thee with his feathers and under His wings thou shalt trust." The God who whirls the suns through space and directs the stars in their courses, does not forget His own: "He shall feed ~~his~~ flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." He does ^{even more than that for his sheep} all that and more. He is the good shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep.

That brings us straight back to the cross--the cross that says in history and in a deed more eloquent than any words, that God does love us, loved us even enough to die for us, and that his peace for us is peace (in this shattered world, peace even under the ^{thrashing} ~~shattered~~ tail of the dragon, for that is exactly where he came to win our peace. He made peace thru blood, the blood of his cross, and not all the bloody wars of history can wash that peace away.

How does his blood bring peace? We ^{do} cannot fully know. God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. Probe deeply enough and all God's ways are mystery, for his way is in the sea and his path in the great waters. But we do know in part. That's what the Bible is for. In it God tells us about his ways. Not for nothing do the gospel writers lay so much stress on the death of our Lord. 1/3 of Matt, 1/3 of Mk., 1/4 of Luke and 1/2 of John is taken up with our Lord's last week on earth, the events preparing for an including his death. This is a strangely off-balance biography unless there is some tremendous significance to his death.

In that tremendous significance lies the peace of the cross for you and me. It is just this: his death means the peace of sins forgiven, of right relationships with God restored. Our sins nailed Jesus to the cross: our pride as well as the pride of the Pharisees, our indifference as well as the indifference of the Roman soldiers, our greed and the greed of Judas. Our sins nailed him there, but for these very sins he died, and dying said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." There on the cross, as Jesus took on himself our punishment, our sins were washed away.

He took the punishment. Ours is now the peace. This is the way one old Christian saint put it. She was crippled with disease. A friend asked her, "You ^{a quiet deed, aren't you.} suffer ~~much, I fear.~~" "Yes," she said, "but," pointing to her ~~head~~ ^{head} "there is no nail there. He had the nails, I have the peace." ^{She laid} ~~Laying~~ her hand on her ~~brow~~ ^{brow} ~~she said,~~ "There are no ~~thorns~~ ^{she touched} here. He had the thorns, I have the peace." ~~Touching~~ her side, ~~she said,~~ "There is no spear here. He had the spear, I have the peace."

That is what Paul meant when he said, "Jesus Christ made peace through the blood of his cross."

THE CROSS MEANS PEACE

Colossians 1:20

"Making peace by the blood of his cross." The war is over, writes Paul to the Colossians. "God made peace by the blood of the cross".

If that is true, if the cross makes peace, surely that is the good news that our weary world is waiting for -- peace. And that is the good news that our divided churches need -- peace. And that is what our troubled hearts need -- peace.

But some people will argue, "Jesus died on the cross 2000 years ago. "Where is that peace today?" Others say, " How can such a cruel thing as a cross make peace? The cross is a symbol of bloody agony, not peace. It is an instrument of torture, of nail-pierced hands, of death, not peace." All that is true. Why, then, did Paul, looking for a word to describe the meaning of the cross, call it peace? How did God take an act of execution and a moment of such suffering and make it peace?

The answer is in our Bibles. Believers have found that the Bible always sees things as they really are. The Bible tells us that there is only one source of real peace, Jesus Christ, the Christ of the cross. And there are three kinds of peace: peace for the world; peace in the church; and peace in our hearts. God's peace is a peace for the whole world, a peace which the world cannot make for itself. And God's peace is peace for the church, which is His church, not ours. And finally, it is an inner peace available for everyone. Are you suffering? You can know God's peace. Have you sinned? God's peace can be yours. God sent his Son to die for you. He "made peace", the Bible says, "by the blood of the cross."

I. First, the cross means peace for the world. When we say that, we do not mean that the cross has brought world peace. Not yet. War in Iraq is on

our televisions sets every night. There is war in the Sudan, and war in Israel between Arabs and Jews. And there is a new and terrible kind of war that knows no borders, and no mercy, and can explode anywhere in the world, every time of day or night--Terrorism. And there is violence in every large city in this troubled world.

No, it is not world peace. Ever the cross has not brought that. But there is a peace that the cross, and the Christ of the cross, has brought. Not world peace, but peace for the world. How? In two ways. At the cross, God who created the world, shows us that He still rules the world. The whole world is in His hands, and his peace is peace on a cosmic scale. Brooding above the eddies and whirlpools of this small, restless world, there is peace in the sovereign will of God. At the very moment when chaos reached its climax in the death of Christ, the cross became the foundation of an everlasting peace. For even the terrible cross is ordained of God, and in the order of his universe, it becomes our peace.

That sounds almost impossible. How can there be peace in a moment of chaos and defeat? But let me use a famous painting as an illustration, the painting of St. George and the dragon. St. George in shining armor is at the top of the picture. In his left hand he holds what looks like a battle flag. In his right hand is a spear. It looks like war: St. George against the dragon. But look closer. There is a cross on the banner. And look at the spear, it has pierced the dragon and the dragon is dying. And look at St. George's foot. It is on the dragon's neck. If the dragon, twisting in death, is all you see, of course there is no peace. But look at St. George. He holds high the cross, and his foot is on the neck of the dragon, and there is peace.

The cross stands at that moment in history when God, like St. George,

brings his foot down. When Satan battles with the Son of God, even as he nails him to the cross, victory is with the Son, and that means peace. When we look at the world, as when we look at the picture, the first impression is one of unending struggle. But if we keep our eyes on Jesus whom Satan thought he had killed on the cross, we know that the real war is over. Jesus did not fail by dying on the cross; Jesus Christ, the Son of God, won his greatest victory by dying on the cross. He won the battle against sin and death. He won for us a peace far greater than any this world of ours can offer. "God made peace by the blood of his cross"; and "if God is for us, who can be against us?"

But what about the depressing fact that the world is still full of wars and struggle. No one can deny that. Nevertheless, there is another lesson in the cross about God's peace for the world. Yes there are wars and there is still struggle. But don't forget God. God is still in control. By His perfect will, He over-rules the chaos and apparent defeat that was the crucifixion. The cross is empty, evil is overcome, and the crucified one is not dead, but lives. The cross in Protestant churches is an empty cross. It is empty because Christ is alive and present with us, and he has overcome the world.

In that sense, peace is already realized. For peace anticipated is peace begun. It is something like the peace and assurance that a doctor brings into a home distressed by sudden illness. The doctor has come, and it is all right. Is the child well? No, but the doctor has come, and the anxious parents relax as they watch the doctor work, calm and steady. The danger is not past but peace is already coming into the home.

II. But the second lesson in the Bible about peace is that The cross means peace, not only for the world but for the Church. If the sovereignty of

God means ultimate peace for the world, how much more can his love bring peace to our divided quarreling churches. The Bible says that if God so loved us--loved us enough to send His Son to die for us on the cross--then we ought to love one another. (I John 4:19-21). But as someone once said, "How can a divided, quarreling church promise peace to a divided, quarreling world". One great help the Korean church could offer to reunion between north and south Korea would be to begin by showing the world that Christians love one another. Paul says in another letter, "[Christ] is our peace; He makes us both one; He has broken down the dividing wall of hostility between us" [Ephesians 2:14]. Paul is speaking there of the wall between Jews and Gentiles, but what Jesus did on the cross to break down that wall, surely He can do to break down the lesser walls that divide His people in Korea--Hapdong and Tonghap and Koryo and Kijang. The strength of the Korean church has been evangelism and church growth; its weakness, as with Protestants everywhere, has been disunity. Where else in the world is there a Jesus Presbyterian Church and a Christ Presbyterian Church, and Jesus is out of fellowship with Christ. The cross of Christ breaks down the walls, and leads to repentance, and in love finds ways to be kind and to cooperate with other Christians who also love and obey Him. "God made peace through the blood of the cross."

III. But there is an even deeper way that the cross can bring us peace. The third lesson from the Bible is that The cross means peace for each one of us personally, now. A newspaper story years ago told about the end of World War II in the Philippines. The Japanese were defeated, and surrendered. But 29 years later, a Japanese soldier, Hiru Otani, was found hiding deep back in the tropical forest. When he was discovered, he shot back at the men who discovered him. He didn't know that the war was over. He hadn't surrendered,

and like many Japanese soldiers he was ready to die rather than surrender. Even when he was told that the Japanese had surrendered years ago, and that he could come out safely now, he didn't believe them. Newspapers were dropped to him to prove that the war was over. He thought they were forgeries, printed to trap him into surrendering. The war was over; but not for him. All he needed to do was believe it, but he wouldn't do it.

Too many people today are like that soldier. They refuse to believe that the war is ended, that Christ conquered death, and rose again to give us life, to give us His peace. The cross was God's gift of peace, but like the Japanese soldiers we refuse to receive it. That poor man, living like a hunted animal for 29 years, was just one step away from a peace that had already been accomplished. So also with us, one step, repentance--and the cross makes peace. One step, repentance--and our fears and guilt will turn to peace and joy everlasting. That is the great good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.

I have heard of one old Christian saint who put it this way. She was crippled with disease. A friend asked her, "Aren't you suffering very much?" "Yes", she said, "but there is no nail here," and she held out her hand. "He had the nails, I have the peace." She touched her side. "There is no spear here. He had the spear. I have the peace." It is personal and it is real.

"God made peace through the blood of the cross." The Christ of the cross is the King of Kings and Prince of Peace. So let us pray every day for peace in Iraq, and Sudan. The Christ of the Cross is the Lord of the Church, so let us ask him to bring His peace to His church, and end our Presbyterian quarrels. The Christ of the Cross is the Healer of our Souls, so let us open our hearts and let his peace come in... today. Amen.

* Quite the opposite, I'm afraid. In the name of the cross the church of the crusaders brought war, not peace, and threw army after plundering army across Europe into the Holy Land. In the name of the cross Christians have hunted down Jews and killed them like rats. I have read of Jewish pogroms in Russia, where Orthodox priests, huge crosses embroidered on their robes, would lead mobs to burn and loot and murder in the homes of Jews, and how the Jews would be herded into line and soldiers would search for those who wore no crosses about their necks. No honest Jew would wear a cross. So the devout among them would try to cover their lack by lowering their heads only to have their chins jerked up, their lack discovered, and be thrown to the ground while soldiers stamped their hob-nailed boots in their faces. All that in the name of the cross. How can we say that the cross makes peace?

Of course, we can make some show of argument in its favor. There is the curious, rather pathetic attempt of the church of the eleventh century to bring a Christian peace to the world. The Peace of God, it was called. The church ordered the warring princes of Europe not to interfere with the rights of non-combatants, not to harm pilgrims and merchants and farmers, not to cut down trees and destroy fields of grain. It was an attempt to make of war a private little game between princes, a sport for gentlemen, and not the all-devouring disaster that it is today. When you blame the church for the crusades, remember to credit it with the Peace of God. But even that was not real peace.

No, it is not world peace that the cross brings. Korea is still divided north and south. There is war in Eastern Europe. Fighting in the ancient Near East. Violence in the streets of most of the world's great cities.

** The cross lifts the curtain of the ages and lets us see that when the powers of darkness like thick, evil clouds swirling out of the pit, threaten to snuff out the Light of the World, at that very moment the Light is declared gloriously inextinguishable. When Satan battles with the Son of God, even as he nails him to the cross, victory is with the Son. And that means peace -- a peace far greater than this little world of ours can comprehend; a peace beyond time in eternity; peace on a cosmic scale. "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." Through the Son, God decided to bring the whole universe back to himself. God made peace through his Son's death on the cross.

Christ's victory on the cross is only a foretaste of the blessed time when the Christ whom the cross could not hold will return as conqueror and Prince of Peace; "when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, when people shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not rise against nation, and they shall practice war no more."

*** A peace which must be big enough for the whole universe and for all eternity can be so vast and abstract that it completely misses you and me, struggling as we are in our little moment of time.* Is there not a chance that peace which must be always anticipated may never come true? After all, we are living in the present, not the future. We are in the picture, not looking at it from outside, and what comfort is there in the knowledge that God's foot is on the dragon's neck if we are being cut to pieces by its thrashing tail?

**** "This is my Father's world, O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world, the battle is not done;
Jesus who died shall be justified,
And earth and heaven be one."

***** We may not fully understand it. God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. Probe deeply enough and all God's ways are part mystery to us. But we do know in part. That is what the Word of God tells us. And Christian experience confirms it. God's Word tells us how the cross, that instrument of death for Jesus, reconciled the love and justice of God, taking upon himself the punishment for your sins and mine, the penalty for our transgressions.

***** Does the cross mean peace for brother against brother in North and South Korea? Does it mean peace for the African Christians in the Sudan? Does it mean peace for a woman about to die with cancer, for a man who has fallen into sin and been untrue to his wife? Does it mean peace for the employer or the worker or the student who has done what he knows is wrong? There is a difference between the peace of God's final victory over sin, which is already assured by Christ's victory on the cross, and the peace of our personal salvation which is not sure for everybody, as Jesus weeping over Jerusalem made very clear.

Jesus did all he could to make it sure. He became human; he emptied himself, he became a servant, he became obedient even to the point of death on the cross, in order to show us how much God loves us. and that the peace He wants to give us is personal peace -- peace even under the thrashing tail of the dragon, for that is exactly where He came to win us our personal peace.

***** Not all the struggles and sorrows of history can take that peace away. God's work of love and reconciliation on the cross is accomplished. We can be sons and daughters, not strangers and enemies of God. We must return, like the prodigal son, in trust and humility to the Father.

THE CROSS MEANS PEACE

Colossians 1:20

"Making peace by the blood of his cross." ^{here,} ~~This verse says~~
~~that the~~ ^{Christ's} cross makes peace, ~~if so,~~ ^{good news} then the ~~purpose~~ ^{of} the cross
 is precisely what our war-weary world is looking for today. But
 what peace is there in a cross?

Surely the cross is bloody agony, not peace. ~~It means~~ cold
 torture, and iron pierced hands. ^{is} It ~~means~~ torment, and defeat
 and death--all this, but not peace. Did not Paul know that?

The Romans did. The cross was their electric chair, their gas
^{chamber} ~~chamber~~, their hanging tree. Why then did Paul, looking for a word
 to describe the meaning of the cross, call it peace? And how did
 God take an instrument and a moment of torture and make it peace?

In two ways, I think. ^{God willing as he that} First, the cross means peace for the
^{in spite of everything you see and hear in your daily newspaper.} world. And ~~Second,~~ even more directly, the cross means peace
 for the individual, for any troubled soul who will come to find
 his peace in Him who died on the cross.

1. The cross means peace for the world.

When we say that, ~~the cross means peace for the world~~ we do
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 them like rats. I have read of ~~the~~ Jewish pogroms in Russia, where
~~the~~ Orthodox priests, huge crosses embroidered on their robes,
 would lead mobs to burn and ^{loot} ~~pillage~~ and murder in the homes of
~~the~~ Jews, and how the Jews would be herded into line and soldiers
 would search for those who wore no crosses about their necks. No

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honest Jew would wear a cross. So the devout among them would try to cover their lack by lowering their heads only to have their chins jerked up, their lack discovered, and be thrown to the ground while ~~the~~ soldiers stamped their ~~heavy~~ hob-nailed boots in their faces. All that in the name of the cross. How can we say it has made peace?

Of course, we can make some show of argument in its favor. There is ^{the} a curious, rather pathetic attempt of the church of the eleventh century to bring a Christian peace to the world. The Peace of God, it was called. The church ordered the warring princes of Europe not to interfere with the rights of non-combatants, not to harm pilgrims and merchants and farmers, not to cut down trees and destroy fields of grain. It was an attempt to make of war a private little game between princes, a sport for gentlemen, and not the all-devouring disaster that it is today. When you blame the church for the crusades, remember to credit it with the Peace of God. But even that was not real peace.

Handwritten note:
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No, it is not world peace that the cross brings, but rather peace for the world; ~~xxxxaxz&azixxwouddxsazyzihazzerosszixxthexemprere~~
~~dazonnztrazixxofzihazszovereizntyzofx&odyzandzihixxaznsxprazazxix~~
~~zaznsxprazazexinziaznsazns~~ peace in two senses. In the cross we see a sovereign God over-ruling all disorder by the order and peace of his own perfect will; and in the cross we have a present ~~anticip~~ anticipation of future peace.

Handwritten note:
This is "the by picture" fixed first ~~on~~ the water-buck & the lion; and the G-day has a the direct.
Buy it into some paper.

The first is peace on a cosmic scale. Brooding above the eddies and whirlpools of this small restless world there is peace in the sovereign will of God. All our times are in his hands. [Col. 1:16-17]

At the very moment when chaos reached its climax in the death of

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Christ on the cross, by the unfathomable will of the Living God that climax of chaos, the cross, became the foundation of our peace. For even the terrible cross is ordained of God, and in the order of his universe it becomes peace: ~~for all~~.

~~"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."~~

If that sounds ~~strangely~~ paradoxical, perhaps it can be illustrated by a familiar picture you will all remember, the old picture of St. George and the Dragon. St. George is above, ^{on a white charge,} in shining armor, grasping the banner of the cross in one hand. In the other he holds a sword or a spear, and it drips with the blood of the dragon at his feet. ^{Some} ~~Many~~ have noted a strange ^{incompleteness} ~~paradox~~ in the impression that picture gives. At first glance ^{it} is all ~~the picture seems one of~~ primeval struggle and conflict. But there is one significant detail that wipes out that first impression. St. George's foot is on the neck of the dragon, ^{and} ~~somehow~~ that one small, ~~but~~ central detail transforms the overall effect of the picture. ~~It drips with blood and gore, but the feet of the saint on the dragon transforms it~~ from struggle into peace, ~~a peace reflected in the face of the conqueror.~~ Of course, if ^{we} ~~you~~ look only at the dragon, twisting as it dies, there is no peace. But do not leave out St. George. Look at his foot. It is always on the neck of the dragon, and there is peace.

Now the cross stands at that moment in history when God, like St. George, brings his foot down. When we look at the world, as when we look at the picture, the first impression is

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one of unending struggle. But if we ~~will~~ keep our eyes on God, then in the world as in the picture, we see things in their true proportion, and we find His peace.

The cross lifts the curtain of the ages and lets us see that when the powers of ~~darkness, have sealed the very supports of~~ ~~heaven,~~ when like thick, evil clouds swirling out of the pit, ~~they~~ threaten to snuff out the Light of the World, at that very moment the Light is declared gloriously inextinguishable. When Satan battles with the Son of God, even as he nails him to the cross, victory is with the Son. And that means peace--a far peace far greater than this little world of ours can comprehend, a peace beyond time in eternity, peace on a cosmic scale. "For ~~through the Son, God decided to bring the whole universe back to himself. God made peace through his Son,~~ in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through ~~death on the cross, and so brought back to himself all things, both in heaven and on earth" (1:20)~~ him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."

^{Christ's}
The victory on the cross is only a foretaste of the blessed time when the Christ whom the Cross could not hold will return as conqueror and Prince of Peace; ~~and will rule the world in righteousness and peace,~~ "when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, when men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not rise against nation, and they shall study war no more."

Of course that ~~time~~ time is not here yet. The fight is not over. But peace in a very real sense is here already, for ~~peace anticipated~~ can bring peace. It is something like the peace and assurance that a doctor brings into a home made frantic by sudden illness. The doctor has come, and it is all right. Is the boy all well? No, but the doctor has come, and the anxious

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parents relax as they watch him about his work, steady and calm and sure. The ~~fight~~ ^{danger is not past} ~~is not over~~, but peace is already in the home.

That is one way the cross brings peace. God has come into the world. The ~~fight~~ ^{struggle} is not over, but the cross is empty and Christ lives, and ~~he~~ has overcome the world.

"This is my Father's world, O let me ne'er forget

That though the wrong seems oft so strong,

God is the ruler yet.

This is my Father's world, the battle is not done;

Jesus who died shall be justified,

And earth and heaven be one."

But is that enough? ^{Cosmic peace is fine; but if it is not personal, it is not real.} ~~Though there may be peace in knowing~~

stat || ~~that the eternal God is not dethroned by war, and that the cross is victory with a promise of future blessedness. How is ^{that} ~~that~~ made real to us now? Is there not a danger that~~ A peace which must be

big enough for the stars and for eternity, ^{can} ~~will~~ be so vast and abstract that it ~~will~~ completely miss^s you and me, struggling as we are in our little moment of time? Is there not a ^{chance} ~~danger~~ that peace which must be always anticipated may never come true?

After all, we are living in the present, not the future. We are in the picture, not looking at it from outside, and what comfort is there in the knowledge that God's foot is on the dragon's neck if we are being cut to pieces by its thrashing tail? What does the cross mean now?

Does it mean peace for brother fighting against brother in ~~shattered~~ Viet Nam? Does it mean peace for the Negro in Alabama, ^{Detent,} for a ^{we man} ~~man~~ about to die with cancer, for ^a ~~the~~ ^a ~~pen~~ who has tried and

(6)

ferried to (shake free from) the habits of sin? There is a difference between the peace of God's ultimate victory over all which is sure ~~and~~ but cosmic, and the peace of ~~our~~ ^{our} salvation which is very personal but not sure for all, as Jesus weeping over Jerusalem made very clear.

He did all he could to make it sure. He came even to the cross in a deed that says more eloquently than any words that God loves us and that the peace He would give us is personal peace, peace even under the thrashing tail of the dragon, for that is exactly where He came to win us our peace, ~~He made peace in suffering through the blood of his cross,~~ and not all the struggles and sorrows of history can take that peace away.

We ~~do~~ ^{may} not fully understand it. God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. Probe deeply enough and all God's ways are mystery. But we do know in part. That is what the Word of God ^{tells us. And in experience confirms it.} ~~is for.~~ [It tells us how Jesus reconciled the love and justice of God, taking on himself on the cross the punishment for our sins, the penalty for man's mistakes.]

(7)

The rest is up to us. God's work of love and reconciliation on the cross is accomplished. We can be sons, not strangers, if like the prodigal we will but return in faith and love to the Father.

✓ All it takes is an act of the will, a step of faith. The barriers are ~~down~~ down. He took the punishment, and ours can be the peace.

I have heard how one old Christian saint put it. She was crippled with disease. A friend asked her, "Aren't ~~Do~~ you suffering ^{very} much?" "Yes," she said, "but there is no nail here," and she pointed to her hand. "He had the nails, I have the peace." She pointed to her head. "There are no thorns here. He had the thorns, I have the peace." She touched her side.

"There is no spear here. He had the spear. I have the peace."

~~This is part of our salvation. It is a glorious part~~
^{It is personal if it is real.}
~~And that, ~~to~~ is~~

* what the Apostle meant when he ^{said that "God made} ~~wrote of Jesus Christ~~ "making peace ^{through} by the blood of ^{Christ's} ~~his~~ cross."

- Samuel Hugh Mifflin
Seoul, Korea

- 2 statements hard for the modern mind to accept: ① Peace has come.
② Peace comes through blood.

THE CROSS MEANS PEACE

The war is over.

"God made peace through the blood of the cross," says Paul.
But that was 2000 years ago, and where is that peace? ^{Not too many months ago} ~~Last week~~
a truck ^{anchored} ~~grounded~~ unsuspectingly along an empty, bumpy Korean road -
a water truck. And suddenly, deadly, cross-fire pins it down,
rakes it mercilessly, and three American men are dead by the side of
the road. Is that peace?

^{less than 2 months ago} ~~A few~~ ^{two} men in the hot sun roll some guns into place
in one of the most God-forsaken, desolate waterless, wind-blown
headland pieces of real estate in the world - a desert headland on
the Sinai peninsula - and in a matter of days five nations are locked
at ~~war~~ in a lightning war that ^{flattens} ~~leaves~~ Egypt, Jordan and Syria militarily
paralyzed in six short days. Is that peace?

It's not peace that costs \$25 billion a year ^{in Vietnam} and ~~12,000 already~~
~~dead in Vietnam~~. It's not peace that brings planeloads of mercenaries
swooping in over the Congo, and poison gas swirling across the
Yemeni desert. It wants peace that ~~puts~~ ^{sends you packing out of} your beach-cabin ~~away from~~ ^{but} for 5 hours Friday, you

But "God made peace," says Paul. And the rest of the
verse is even more difficult. He made peace "through the blood of
the cross." ^{"The cross means peace," he said.} What peace is there in a cross!

The cross is bloody agony, not peace...

moffett. cross-pce.ser

PEACE FOR THE WORLD
Colossians 1:15,17-20

**"He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation... He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."
(Col:1:15, 17-20)**

"Making peace by the blood of his cross." That is a strange sounding phrase. Peace, by the blood of the cross? What Paul is saying, as we shall see, is this: "The war is over. God, through Christ 'made peace by the blood of the cross'".

But isn't that a little hard to believe. Doesn't it sound too simple? If it's true, if the cross really does make peace, surely that is the good news that our weary world is waiting for -- peace. And that is the good news that our divided churches need -- peace. And that is what our troubled hearts need -- peace.

But some people want to argue about it. They say that it sounds good but it doesn't work. "Jesus died on the cross 2000 years ago and where is that promised peace?" they say. There is no peace, not even in Jerusalem. Arabs and Jews are fighting in the streets right there in the city of the cross." Others raise other objections. They say, " How can such a cruel thing as a cross make peace? The cross is a symbol of bloody agony, not peace. It is an instrument of torture, of nail-pierced hands, of death, not peace." All that is true. But why, then, did

Paul, looking for a word to describe the meaning of the cross, call it peace? How could God take an act of execution and a moment of such suffering and make it peace?

The answer is in our Bibles. Too often we try to define peace on our own terms. But believers have found that the Bible sees things as they really are, and in "the strange new world of the Bible", peace means what Jesus said it means. Remember how he said to his disciples: "My peace I give unto you", and it is not like what the world gives you, and calls peace. In the Christian faith, there is only one source of real peace, Jesus Christ, the Christ of the cross. And Jesus speaks of three kinds of peace: peace for the world; ² (peace in the church^{nation}) and peace in our own hearts.

I. First, the cross means peace for the world. When we say that, we do not mean that the cross has brought world peace. Not yet. Every once in a while the London Economist prints a chart of how many wars are going on in the world. I haven't seen the most recent ones, but I recently came across the chart for about ^{nine} eight years ago. It listed 25 different wars going on in that one year, 1988. I had completely forgotten most of them. I remembered the biggest one, between Iran and Iraq. But do you remember what the second biggest war was then? It was in Mozambique and it had killed just as many people as the Iran/Iraq war. In one year those 25 wars killed 3 million people, mostly civilians. That was ⁹ 8 years ago, but I'm sad to have to tell you there are just as many wars going on today. And that isn't all. There's the war in our streets, the violence ^{which} paralyzing life in every large city on this troubled globe. There is no peace.

No, it is not world peace that the cross brings, but peace for the world.

It brings peace in two ways. First, at the cross, God who created the world, shows us that He still rules the world. His peace is peace on a cosmic scale.

Brooding above the eddies and whirlpools of this small, restless world, there is peace in the sovereign will of God. At the very moment when chaos reached its climax in the death of Christ, the cross became the foundation of an everlasting peace. For even the terrible cross is ordained of God, and in the order of his universe, it becomes our peace.

But how can that be? Would that it were so, but how can there be peace in a moment of chaos and defeat? Let me try to explain it by using a famous painting as an illustration. When I was a boy my parents, probably hoping for a little more peace in the house--they had five boys--hung the picture of St. George and the dragon in our bedroom. You may remember it. St. George in shining armor is at the top of the picture. In his left hand he holds what looks like a battle flag. ~~I liked that.~~ In his right hand is a spear. It looks like war: St. George against the dragon. But look closer. There is a cross on the banner. And look at the spear, it has pierced the dragon and the dragon is dying. And look at St. George's foot. It is on the dragon's neck. If the dragon, twisting in death, is all you see, of course there is no peace. But look at St. George. He holds high the cross, and his foot is on the neck of the dragon, and there is peace.

The cross stands at that moment in history when God, like St. George, brings his foot down. When Evil, when Satan, battles with the Son of God, even as he nails him to the cross, victory is with the Son, and that means peace. When we look at the world, as when we look at the picture, the first impression is one of unending struggle. But if we keep our eyes on Jesus whom Satan thought he had killed on the cross, we know that the real war is over. Jesus did not fail by dying on the cross. That is the heresy of the Moonies, of the Rev. Moon Sun-Myung. He claims that Jesus should not have died, he should have finished the enemy then and there, and since Jesus didn't do it, he, Rev. Moon will do it for

us. But the cross was not a failure. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, won his greatest victory by dying on the cross. He won for us a peace far greater than any this world of ours can offer. "God made peace by the blood of his cross"; and "if God is for us, who can be against us?"

Yes, there are wars and there is still struggle. But don't forget God. God is still in control. By His perfect will, He over-rules the chaos and turns defeat into victory. The cross in Protestant churches is an empty cross. It is empty because Christ is alive and present with us, and he has overcome the world. Remember what he said about His peace. "My peace I give unto you... Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. I have overcome the world."

In that sense, peace is already realized. It is something like the peace and assurance that a doctor brings into a home distressed by sudden illness. The doctor has come, and it is all right. Is the child well? No, but the doctor has come, and the anxious parents relax as they watch the doctor work, calm and steady. The danger is not past but peace is already coming into the home.

II. But the second lesson in the Bible about peace is that The cross means peace, not only for the world but for the Church. If the sovereignty of God means peace for the world, how much more surely can his love bring peace to our divided quarreling churches. The Bible says that if God so loved us--loved us enough to send His Son to die for us on the cross--then we ought to love one another. (I John 4:19-21). ^{But how can a scandal-stricken nation hope to promise credible leadership to a lawless disoriented world} But how can a divided, quarreling, selfish church promise peace to a divided, quarreling world".

An old Jewish story tells how a rabbi said "He said peace is as different from war as day from night. A student said, "But how can we tell when night ends and day begins? Is it when you can tell a sheep from a dog at a great distance?" "No" said the rabbi. "A date palm from a fig tree?" "No", said the rabbi. "It is when you look into the face of any human creature and see your brother or your

sister there. Until then, night is still with us."

Take the case of Korea. I could sing the praises of the Korean churches all day. They are the fastest growing churches in the world. There are more Presbyterians in Korea than in America. The largest Presbyterian congregation in the world is not in Scotland; it's in Seoul, Korea. The largest Methodist congregation is not in England; it's in Seoul Korea. The largest Pentecostal congregation is not in Southern California; its in Seoul, Korea.

But it has its weaknesses. The strength of the Korean church has been evangelism and church growth; but as with Protestants everywhere, its greatest weakness is disunity. Where else in the world but in Korea is there a Jesus Presbyterian Church and a Christ Presbyterian Church, and Jesus is out of fellowship with Christ.

Is there any cure? The cure, says the Scriptures, was the cross. "Christ made peace by the blood of the cross", and that, he says elsewhere is a peace that unites. "[Christ] is our peace"; he wrote to the Ephesians, "He makes us both one; He has broken down the dividing wall of hostility between us" [Ephesians 2:14]. He was speaking there of the wall between Jews and Gentiles, but what Jesus did on the cross to break down that wall, breaks down also the lesser walls that divide His people in Korea, for example, or right in our own Presbyterian denomination. If only we believe, and obey, and repent, and take up the cross and follow him. Then, and only then, for us,

"God makes peace through the blood of the cross."

*Repent - the great wa is
our part was the blood -
but we must repent and
be on hand in no system
we can open God's eyes - the
side*

III. That is the deeper, the final way to peace. It is the third lesson from this passage about peace: The cross means peace for each one of us personally, now. Some of you may remember a newspaper story years ago about the end of World War II in the Philippines. The Japanese had been defeated, and

surrendered. But 29 years later, a Japanese soldier, Hiru Otani, was found hiding deep back in the tropical forest. When he was discovered, he shot back at the men who discovered him. He didn't know that the war was over. He had never surrendered, and like many Japanese soldiers he was ready to die rather than surrender. Even when he was told that the Japanese had surrendered years ago, and that he could come out safely now, he didn't believe them. Newspapers were dropped to him to prove that the war was over. He thought they were forgeries, printed to trap him into surrendering. The war was over; but not for him. All he needed to do was believe it, but he wouldn't believe.

Too many people today are like that soldier. They refuse to believe that the war is ended, that Christ conquered death, and rose again to give us life, to give us His peace. The cross was God's gift of peace, but like the Japanese soldiers we refuse to receive it. That poor man, living like a hunted animal for 29 years, was just one step away from a peace that had already been accomplished. So also with us, one step, repentance--and the cross makes peace. One step, repentance--and our fears and guilt will turn to peace and joy everlasting. That is the great good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.

I have heard of one dear Christian woman who put it this way. She was crippled with disease. A friend asked her, "Aren't you suffering very much?" "Yes", she said, "but there is no nail here," and she held out her hand. "He had the nails, I have the peace." She touched her side. "There is no spear here. He had the spear. I have the peace." It is personal and it is real.

"God made peace through the blood of the cross." And may the God of peace, who brought forth from the dead, His only Son our Lord Jesus Christ, grant you His peace, both now and forevermore. Amen.

* Quite the opposite, I'm afraid. In the name of the cross the church of the crusaders brought war, not peace, and threw army after plundering army across Europe into the Holy Land. In the name of the cross Christians have hunted down Jews and killed them like rats. I have read of Jewish pogroms in Russia, where Orthodox priests, huge crosses embroidered on their robes, would lead mobs to burn and loot and murder in the homes of Jews, and how the Jews would be herded into line and soldiers would search for those who wore no crosses about their necks. No honest Jew would wear a cross. So the devout among them would try to cover their lack by lowering their heads only to have their chins jerked up, their lack discovered, and be thrown to the ground while soldiers stamped their hob-nailed boots in their faces. All that in the name of the cross. How can we say that the cross makes peace?

Of course, we can make some show of argument in its favor. There is the curious, rather pathetic attempt of the church of the eleventh century to bring a Christian peace to the world. The Peace of God, it was called. The church ordered the warring princes of Europe not to interfere with the rights of non-combatants, not to harm pilgrims and merchants and farmers, not to cut down trees and destroy fields of grain. It was an attempt to make of war a private little game between princes, a sport for gentlemen, and not the all-devouring disaster that it is today. When you blame the church for the crusades, remember to credit it with the Peace of God. But even that was not real peace.

No, it is not world peace that the cross brings. Korea is still divided north and south. There is war in Eastern Europe. Fighting in the ancient Near East. Violence in the streets of most of the world's great cities.

** The cross lifts the curtain of the ages and lets us see that when the powers of darkness like thick, evil clouds swirling out of the pit, threaten to snuff out the Light of the World, at that very moment the Light is declared gloriously inextinguishable. When Satan battles with the Son of God, even as he nails him to the cross, victory is with the Son. And that means peace -- a peace far greater than this little world of ours can comprehend; a peace beyond time in eternity; peace on a cosmic scale. "For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." Through the Son, God decided to bring the whole universe back to himself. God made peace through his Son's death on the cross.

Christ's victory on the cross is only a foretaste of the blessed time when the Christ whom the cross could not hold will return as conqueror and Prince of Peace; "when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, when people shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not rise against nation, and they shall practice war no more."

*** A peace which must be big enough for the whole universe and for all eternity can be so vast and abstract that it completely misses you and me, struggling as we are in our little moment of time.* Is there not a chance that peace which must be always anticipated may never come true? After all, we are living in the present, not the future. We are in the picture, not looking at it from outside, and what comfort is there in the knowledge that God's foot is on the dragon's neck if we are being cut to pieces by

its thrashing tail?

**** "This is my Father's world, O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world, the battle is not done;
Jesus who died shall be justified,
And earth and heaven be one."

***** We may not fully understand it. God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. Probe deeply enough and all God's ways are part mystery to us. But we do know in part. That is what the Word of God tells us. And Christian experience confirms it. God's Word tells us how the cross, that instrument of death for Jesus, reconciled the love and justice of God, taking upon himself the punishment for your sins and mine, the penalty for our transgressions.

***** Does the cross mean peace for brother against brother in North and South Korea? Does it mean peace for the African Christians in the Sudan? Does it mean peace for a woman about to die with cancer, for a man who has fallen into sin and been untrue to his wife? Does it mean peace for the employer or the worker or the student who has done what he knows is wrong? There is a difference between the peace of God's final victory over sin, which is already assured by Christ's victory on the cross, and the peace of our personal salvation which is not sure for everybody, as Jesus weeping over Jerusalem made very clear.

Jesus did all he could to make it sure. He became human; he emptied himself, he became a servant, he became obedient even to the point of death on the cross, in order to show us how much God loves us. and that the peace He wants to give us is personal peace -- peace even under the thrashing tail of the dragon, for that is exactly where He came to win us our personal peace.

***** Not all the struggles and sorrows of history can take that peace away. God's work of love and reconciliation on the cross is accomplished. We can be sons and daughters, not strangers and enemies of God. We must return, like the prodigal son, in trust and humility to the Father.

For the Peace of the World

세계의 평화를 위하여

(콜로새서 1:15, 17-20)
Colossians

“그는 보이지 아니하시는 하나님의 형상이요 모든 창조물보다 먼저 나신 자니, 또한 그가 만물보다 먼저 계시고 만물이 그안에 섰느니라. 그는 몸인 교회의 머리라 그가 근본이요 죽은자들 가운데서 먼저 나신 자니 이는 친히 만물의 으뜸이 되려 하심이요. 아버지께서는 모든 충만으로 예수안에 거하게 하시고 그의 십자가의 피로 화평을 이루사 만물 곧 땅에 있는 것들이나 하늘에 있는 것들을 그로 말미암아 자기와 화목케 되기를 기뻐하심이라“

“예수님의 십자가의 보혈로 화평을 이룹시다.” 이 말이 좀 이상하게 들리지 않아요? 십자가의 피로써의 화평.....? 자, 그러면 이것이 무슨 뜻일까요. 바울 선생님은 콜로새서에서 이렇게 말씀하십니다. “싸움은 이제 끝났습니다. 하나님께서는 예수님의 보혈의 피로써 우리에게 화평을 주셨습니다.” 만약에 십자가가 화평을 이룬것이 사실이라면, 진정으로 그것이 복음 이라고 말하지 않을 수 없습니다.

- 복음은 피곤하고 지친 이 세상이 기다리는 화평 입니다.
- 복음은 분열 되어 가는 우리 교회가 기다리는 화평 입니다.
- 복음은 갈등하는 우리마음을 온전케 하는 화평 입니다.

어떤사람들은 서로 논쟁을 하기도 합니다.
 “ 2천년전에 돌아가신 예수님이 약속하신 화평이 어디있습니까?
 하물며 십자가가 있었던 바로 그도시인 예루살렘 에서도 아랍사람들과 유대인들은 싸움이 끝나지 않고 있지않습니까? 진정한 평화는 없습니다.”
 또 다른 어떤사람들은 이렇게도 말하지요.
 “어떻게 그 잔인한 십자가 사건으로 부터 화평을 이룬다는 것입니까? 십자가는 피 와 고통 그리고 형고문 으로부터 못 박힌 손바닥을 상징하는 죽음이지요. 어떻게 바울 선생님은 이러한 십자가의 사실을 화평이라고 합니까? 어떻게 하나님은 사람이 처형되는 고통의 순간을 화평을 만들 수 있습니까?”

거기에 대한 대답을 우리 성경에서 찾아봅시다.
 우리는 화평에 대한 정의를 우리의 지식으로 내리려고 하나 “~~이상한 새~~ ~~세상~~의 성경” 안에서는 예수님께서 어떻게 화평에 대해서 말씀하셨는가 하는 것입니다. 예수님께서 제자들에게 말씀하시기를
 “ 나의 화평을 너에게 주노라, 이것은 세상이 주는 화평과 다르니라 ”
 그렇습니다! 우리 믿는 사람들은 오직 한 길, 예수님이 주는 진정한 화평이 있습니다.

예수님께서는 세계를 향한 화평,
 교회를 위한 화평,
 각 개인의 내적인 화평함 이 세가지에 대해서 말씀하십니다.

첫째,

십자가는 이 세상을 위한 화평을 의미합니다.
 이것은 단지 십자가가 세계의 화평을 주기 때문이 아닙니다. 때때로 런던에 사는 어느 경제학자~~원~~ 이세상에 몇번의 전쟁이 있었는가를 조사 한 것을 발표합니다. 제가 가장 최근의 조사된 것은 보지 못했고, 지금으로부터 9년전, 1988년에는 25가지의 서로 다른 전쟁이 일년 중에 진행 되어지고 있었다고 합니다.
 다른 전쟁들은 모두 잊혀졌는데 제가 기억하는 가장 큰 전쟁은 이라크 과 이라크 전쟁입니다. 그러면 두 번째로 컸던 전쟁은 어느 것인지 기억하십니까? 그것은 이란, 이라크 전쟁처럼 사람이 많이 죽었던 모잠비크 전쟁이지요. 일년에 25가지의 서로 다른 전쟁에서 3백만명이 죽었으며 죽은사람들은 거의가 일반 시민 이라고 합니다. 또한, 오늘 이시간에도 세상에는 다른 여러 가지의 전쟁이 끊이지 않고 있습니다. 그뿐만 인가요? 이 복잡한 세상의 큰 도시의 거리마다 폭력으로 인해 불구가 되는 전쟁이 아닌 전쟁을 우리는 보고 있습니다. 그러한 전쟁속에 사는 우리들은 화평이 없습니다.

우리 안에는 세상이 주는 화평이 아니고 세상을 위한 화평이 있어야 합니다.
 여기에는 두 가지의 화평이 있습니다. 이 세상을 창조하신 하나님은 아직도 십자가로부터 우주 만물을 주관 하심을 우리에게 보이십니다. 하나님의 주권 속에서는 쉬지않고 돌아 가고 있는 우리들의 삶의 소용돌이에도 화평이 있습니다. 예수님의 죽음으로 그 혼돈이 마지막 질정의 순간으로 왔을때 그 십자가는 영원한 화평의 ~~설립자~~가 되었던 것입니다.

그러나 어떻게 그렇게 될 수 있냐구요? 혼돈과 참혹의 순간이 어떻게 영원한 화평으로 되는 시작이 되는가? 제가 유명한 화가의 그림을 예로 들어서 설명을 드리지요. 제가 어렸을 때 우리 부모님께서서는 아마도 우리 다섯 남자형제 들에게 집안에서 좀더 화평이 있기를 원하셨던지 '성 조오지 와 용' 이 있는 그림을 방에 걸어 놓으셨습니다.
 그림을 보신분들께서는 기억 하시겠지만, 그림에서 위쪽에는 성 조오지가 빛나는 갑옷을 입고 입고 있지요. 그의 왼 손에는 전쟁의 깃발을 들고 있었는데 저는 그것을 좋아했습니
 다. 그의 오른 손에는 창을 들고 있었는데 전쟁 때로 보여졌습니다. 성 조오지는 용 에게 대항 하고 있었으나, 아주 가까이 바라보고 있었습니다. 국기에는 십자가가 있었지요. 그리고 창 을 보세요. 그 창은 용을 찔렀고 용 은 죽어가고 있습니다. 성 조오지의 발은 용 의 목 위에 있으며 거기에는 평화가 없습니다. 그러나 성 조오지는 십자가를 높이 들고 그의 발은 용 위에 올려있는 모습은 평화가 있습니다.

이 그림의 이야기에서 성 조오지의 발을 내려 놓은 것처럼, 하나님의 아들 예수님이 사탄에 의해서 십자가에 못 박히심에도 승리는 하나님의 아들과 함께하며 그것이 곧 화평입니다. 우리가 세상을 볼때나, 이 그림을 볼때는 끝없는 실갱이속의 삶 중에 하나라는 인상을 줍니다. 그러나 사탄이 십자가에서 죽었다는 예수를 생각해보면 정말로 전쟁은 이제 끝났습니다. 예수님은 십자가 위에서 패배가 아닌 승리 하신 것입니다.

이단으로 알려진 문 선명 목사에 의하면 예수님은 죽지 않았어야 하며 원수와 끝까지 싸워야 한다고 하지요. 예수님이 끝까지 원수와 싸우지않고 죽었기 때문에 우리들을 위해서 문 목사 자신이 원수와 싸워서 승리 하겠다고 합니다. 하나님의 아들이신 예수님은 십자가 위에서 죽음으로써 가장 최대의 승리를 할 수 있었습니다.

“하나님은 예수의 십자가의 보혈로 화평을 만드셨습니다.”

“하나님께서 우리를 위하신다면 누가 우리를 대항 하리요.”

그렇습니다. 아직도 우리에게는 전쟁도 있고 삶의 허우적 거리는 고통도 있습니다. 그러나 항상 우리의 삶을 주관하시는 하나님을 잊지 마십시오. 하나님의 완전한 의지가 우리의 혼돈과 환란을 승리로 이끌어 주십니다. 예수님은 살아서 우리와 함께 계시며 세상을 이기기 때문에 장로교안에 있는 십자가는 빈 십자가입니다. 예수님의 말씀을 기억 해보십시오.

“나의 평화를 너에게 주노라..... 너의 마음에 고통과 두려움이 없게하라. 내가 이 세상을 이겼노라.”

이 세상에는 5억 이라는 참으로 많은 사람이 살고 이 지구상에 살고 있으며, 최근의 인터넷의 통계에 의하면 이 모든 사람들을 한 도시의 100명으로 줄여 볼때 이러한 수치가 된다고 합니다.

동양인 57%, 유럽인 21%, 남극과 북극인 14%, 아프리카인 8% 가 될 것이라고 합니다. 또한 여자가 51%, 남자가 49%

백인이 30%, 흑인, 황인, 홍인이 70%,

기독교인이 30%, 다른 여러종교인 70%

그리고 오직 6명만이 세계에서 50%의 부자에 해당되며 6명 모두가 미국의 시민권을 갖춘 사람들이라고 합니다. 세계 전체의 인구중에 80%가 물질주의로 살며 70%가 문맹인이고 50%가 영양 실조로 고통받고 있다고 합니다.

둘째,

성경에서의 십자가의 의미는 단지 세계평화가 아니라 교회의 평화를 의미 합니다.

주권자 이신 하나님이 세계의 평화를 위한 다면' 분열되어서 서로 싸우는 우리교회에 얼마나 많은 하나님의 사랑을 가져와야 할까요.

요한 일서 4장 19절-21절의 말씀을 보면

“우리가 사랑함은 그가 먼저 우리를 사랑 하셨음이라.....우리가 이 계명을 주께 받았나니 하나님을 사랑하는 자는 또한 그 형제를 사랑할지니라.”

그러나 어떻게 이기적인 것으로 인해서 서로 분열되고 싸우는 우리 교회가 분열되고 싸우는 세상을 향하여 평화를 약속 할 수 있단 말입니까?

옛날 탈무드의 이야기에서 스승이 제자에게 평화에 대해서 서로 대화를 합니다.

“평화와 전쟁은 마치 낮과 밤 과 같다”

“선생님, 그러면 언제 밤이 끝나고 낮이 시작 합니까? 아주 먼거리에서 양과 강아지를 구별해서 아는 것과 같습니까?”

아니면 먼 거리에서 무슨 종류의 나무 인가를 알아 보는 것과 같습니까?”

“아니다, 이것은 네가 어느 누구를 만나도 너의 형제의 얼굴을 보는 것이어야 한다. 그때까지 밤은 우리와 함께 있는 것이란다.”

그러나 우리 교회에서조차도 우리는 서로를 형제 처럼 생각하고 행동하지 않을 때가 많이 있습니다. 저는 한국의 교회를 보면 온 종일 찬양을 하고 싶어 집니다. 세계에서 가장 빠르게 성장하고 있는 교인이 증가하고 있는 나라, 장로교인이 미국보다 더 많이 있는 나라, 세계에서 가장 많은 장로교인이 있는 나라가 스코틀랜드가 아니고 한국의 서울입니다. 세계에서 가장 많은 감리교인이 있는 나라가 영국이 아니고 한국의 서울입니다. 세계에서 가장 많은 오순절 교인이 있는 나라가 미국 캘리포니아의 서부가 아니고 한국의 서울입니다. 이토록 한국 교회가 복음주의로부터 급진적인 교회 성장을 갖어 온 것은 참으로 강한점으로 들수 있습니다. 가장 약한점으로는 화합해서 서로 하나가 되지못하고 있다는점입니다. 세계의 어디에도 없는 예수교 장로교와 기독교 장로교로 분리되어서 예수님이 기독교와 함께 친교 할 수 없습니다.

여기에 대해서 치료방법은 없습니까?

성경 말씀에는 그것이 '십자가' 라고 말하고 있습니다. “십자가의 보혈로 화평을 이루사” 또한 예수님이 우리에게 주는 평화로 부터 우리가 하나를 이룬다고 합니다 에베소서 2장 14 절 말씀에 보면 “ 그는 우리의 화평 이신지라 둘로 하나를 만드사 중간에 막힌 담을 허시고” 이 말씀은 그 당시에 유대인과 이방인을 향하여 하신 말씀이며 예수님은 십자가 위에서 담을 무너뜨리 셧습니다. 막힌 담을 허신 것이 분열 되는 한국 교회와 여러종류의 장로교가 되었습니다. 우리는 오직 예수님의 십자가의 보혈를 믿고 회개하며 주님 말씀안에 살고 십자가를 지고 주님을 따라야 할 것입니다.

“ 십자가의 보혈로 화평을 이루사”

셋째,

마지막 세 번째의 화평은 성경말씀에서 십자가의 의미는 우리 각 개인의 화평을 위한다고 합니다. 2차 세계대전이 끝날 무렵에 필리핀에서 있었던일을 신문 기사를 통하여 읽으신 분들은 기억 하실 것입니다.

2차 대전때 일본군이 항복함으로 전쟁은 패하였습니다. 그러나 29년 이후에 일본 병사 '히루 오타' 라는 사람이 정글 숲속에 숨어서 살고 있는 것이 발견 되었습니다. 그가 사람들로부터 찾아지게 되었을 때 사람들에게 총을 쏘며 전쟁이 끝났는지 모르고 있었습니다. 다른 많은 일본군 처럼 항복을 해 본적이 없는 이 병사는 항복을 하느니 차라리 자살을 하려고 했습니다.

이미 오래전에 일본군이 항복을 했으므로 전쟁은 끝났다, 너는 이제 안전하다는 말을 해도 믿지 않았고, 전쟁이 끝났다는 것을 증명 시키기 위해서 신문을 주어도 모두가 자기를 항복 시켜서 잡으려고 하는 것으로 알고 누구의 말도 믿지 않았습니다. 전쟁은 이미 오래전에 끝났습니다. 그러나 그 일본 병사는 아직도 전쟁중에 있었습니다. 그 일본 병사가 필요한 것은 그대로 믿는 것인데 그는 누구도 믿으려고 하지 않았습니다.

오늘날 예수님을 믿는 우리들을 봅시다.

우리들은 이 어리석은 일본 병사와는 다르게 이제는 전쟁이 끝났다는 것을 믿으려고 할까요? 우리들 중에 많은 사람들은 예수님이 우리에게 생명을 주시고 화평을 주시게 하기 위해서 죽음을 정복하고 그 죽음에서 살아나신 사실을 쉽게 믿지 못하고 거절 합니다.

십자가는 하나님께서 우리에게 주신 화평케 하는 선물입니다. 그러나 이 일본 병사처럼 우리는 생명과 화평의 선물을 스스로 거절하며 받지 못하고 있습니다. 참으로 불쌍하고 어리석은 일본 병사는 정글의 타잔 노릇을 하며 살아온 29년의 긴 세월 전에 이미 화평과 생명의 삶이 그에게 와 있었습니다. 그러므로 우리들도 한 발만 회개하면 십자가의 화평을 이루고 한 발만 회개하면 우리들의 불안과 죄에서 영원한 화평과 기쁨을 갖을 수 있다는 것입니다. 그것만이 예수안에서 구원의 최대의 복음인 것을 믿으시기 바랍니다!

저는 끝으로 간단히 참으로 신실한 믿음을 갖춘 어느 여성도의 대화를 소개 해드리겠습니다. 그는 병으로 인해서 다리를 절면서 걸어야만 했습니다. 그것을 보고 있던 그의 친구가 물물었습니다.

“ 아주 많이 아프겠구나 ? ”

“ 응 그래, 그러나 손에 못 박힘도 없고 ” 하며 그는 양손을 내어서 친구에게 보였습니다. “ 예수님은 손에 못을 박히시고, 나의 마음은 화평해 ” 이 말을 들은 친구는 감동이 되었습니다. “ 나는 창으로 찔림도 없는데, 예수님은 창으로 찔리셨어.

나의 마음은 화평해 ”

이것은 어느 한 개인의 신실한 믿음의 고백이 아닐 수 없습니다.

“ 십자가의 보혈로 화평케 하시는 하나님 ” 그리고 하나님의 화평으로 죽음에서 살아나신 하나님의 독생자, 우리 주 예수 그리스도의 평강이 이제로부터 영원토록 함께 할지니라.

아멘,

THE READERS' OUTLOOK

RE: EDITOR

Thank you for your positive contributions as editor of *THE PRESBYTERIAN OUTLOOK*. I value your theological perspective and your willingness to tackle the current issues. Your writing reminds me of the Rev. Aubrey Brown whom I was privileged to meet on several occasions while serving as pastor of the church that his daughter and her family attended in Maryland.

HAL PEASE
Leander, Texas

RE: GROW PEOPLE AND/OR CHURCH?

Tim Filston's article is right on, but is so stunningly obvious it will likely be dismissed by those who decide directives of the PC(USA). As I noted in a previous letter, most congregations who have committed themselves to drawing others to Christ will, when noting Filston's observations, shrug their shoulders, shake their heads and continue to ignore the PC(USA) leadership. Congregationalism in the PC(USA) raises its head higher and higher. As one pastor remarked to me

IN THIS CORNER by Marj

Even though the television was blaring, no one would come to the door when the pastor knocked. So he wrote a note saying "Rev. 3:20: Behold, I stand at the door and knock." The next Sunday at church, a woman handed him a card on which was written "Gen. 3: 10: I heard thy voice and was naked, and hid myself."

recently, "We just send them a small portion of our budget and keep on doing our thing." Another pastor in the same small support group said, "We are designating more of our benevolences to local mission." These are all too familiar refrains I hear from colleagues in ministry.

LAWRENCE WOOD, senior pastor
The Church of the Hills
(Presbyterian Church U.S.A.)
Duluth, Ga.

RE: "IS PEACE POSSIBLE?"

I've read the commentary by the Moderator and those who have responded. I've had the honor of speaking to Rick Ufford-Chase and kicking the topic around. I cannot doubt the sincerity of his dream. I believe it is indeed imperative that we never become comfortable with the use of force to resolve any geo-political situation; however, I believe it is naïve to expect that we can resolve issues in the manner he suggests. I would argue that practical history, the basic teachings of the Reformed faith, and Scripture would argue against national pacifism.

In fact such a resolution was attempted in the case of the so called "Children's Crusade or "Crusade of Innocents" in which innocents and children marched on the Holy Land in an attempt to cause some form of spiritual energy to overcome the advance of Islam. They were slaughtered or sold off into slavery.

I point us to the fifth question of the Heidelberg Catechism: "*Can you live up to this perfectly? A. No. I have a tendency to hate God and my neighbor.*" In his book "Living the Heidelberg" Allen Verhey shares, about this question, that the doctrine it expounds led Reinhold Niebuhr to reject pacifism. I would say it like this—we cannot sit by while one of our neighbors in an act of hatred kills another neighbor. I would add that the catechism is also thoroughly biblical. I won't quote the texts behind it but here are a few "addresses" (Gen 6:5, Rom 3:9-20, Jer 17:9, Eph 2:1-3 and many,

many more).

War therefore may be a means to intervene where great evil is being committed. Many tend to respond with the argument; "then why don't we intervene in all such situations?" Because we cannot. We must realize our own finitude and our own dangerously tainted hearts. War should be avoided, but it is still a necessity for the State just as it is a necessity for the Church to constantly warn of its dangers and present other options. I agree with the others who have spoken. I am glad for intervention in World War I and II and even in Iraq. It is imperfect. It is not the work of the Church and we must strive ever to move peace forward into the world so that force is unnecessary. I am disturbed that many that argue pacifism today were not around during the Kosovo action or the action in Haiti or the action in Somalia until it hit the worldwide press. I am not including the Moderator in this group for I know him to be thoroughly consistent in his position. I am wondering at those who come out of the woodwork when a political party other than their own claims a just war.

I do not argue against individual pacifism, as it is clear that we are to "turn the other cheek" but this command never is applied to the nations and in fact many examples of nations being called to war are found throughout the sacred text. I too am uncomfortable about blessing wars or saying they are "of the Lord." Yet I understand the evil of the tyrant must be opposed with force until God's Kingdom is fulfilled on earth. ...

I dream the same dream as our Moderator. I would love to see 200,000 missionaries moving into regions of need. I also do not want the nightmare of their murder on my heart. We preach so that they may hear and having heard they will believe and having believed then they will follow God, not earthly power. The world will only change as the Kingdom of God is

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PACIFISM

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